

MAR 25 PM4:15

March 5, 1998

Eileen Stommes, Deputy Administrator  
USDA-AMS-TM-NOP, Room 4007-S  
Ag Stop 0275, P.O. Box 96456  
Washington, D.C. 20090-6456

Re: **General Comment to the Proposed Rule for the National Organic Program**  
Federal Register Volume 62, December 16, 1997  
Docket No. TMD-94-00-2

I am writing to you as a representative of the San Francisco Bay Area food community. The Bay Area is the culinary heartland of the United States. We owe much of our success to the uncompromising high standards for organic production in California, inherent in specialty and organic fruit and vegetables.

California has been the undisputed leader in this field for over 20 years. It is my responsibility to preserve this position by supporting these standards.

The Proposed Rule cited above does not provide comfort to me. I ask the USDA to withdraw the Proposed Rule, endorse standards no lower than the National Organic Standards Board recommendations and regulations of the California Organic Foods Act of 1990 to guarantee the integrity of organic produce across our great nation.

Sincerely,